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REPORT

TO THE

SENATE

ON

SEVERAL WATERSHED PROPOSALS

SUBMITTED BY THE

SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE

FROM THE

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

SEPTEMBER 1983

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Introduction

This report seeks to fulfill the obligation of the Committee on Environment and Public Works to inform the Senate and the Executive Branch of initiatives taken by the Committee. Since 1978, the Committee has published periodic reports that explain in detail Committee actions on those projects that are authorized solely by Committee resolution.

General Statement

The authority for Soil Conservation Service small watershed plans is Public Law 83-566, the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act of 1954, as amended. Under the provisions of that Act, projects either costing over $5 million or those involving structures with a storage capacity of greater than 2,500 acre-feet must be approved by resolution by the appropriate House and Senate Committees.

These watershed protection projects fall into two categories: (1) plans involving a structure of greater than 4,000 acre-feet capacity require a resolution of approval by the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works and the House Committee on Public Works and Transportation; (2) plans involving structures of less than 4,000 acre-feet capacity are reviewed by the congressional agriculture committees.

The Committee on Environment and Public Works finds each of the five projects described in this report to be meritorious and worthy of authorization. The Committee's approval of these projects reflects its recognition of the substantial local support and planning effort behind each of these projects. The Committee also notes that the history of each of these projects provides an excellent example of the local, State, and Federal cooperation intended by Public Law 83-566.

Subcommittee Legislation

Coincidental with the Committee's consideration of these five projects is its Subcommittee on Water Resources consideration of omnibus water resources legislation (S.1739) containing provisions addressing the SCS Small Watersheds program. The provisions attempt to rectify concerns the Committee has had about the more expensive projects being authorized merely by Committee resolution, the apparent shift away from projects whose major benefits are agriculture related, potentially underutilized recreational potential at impoundments constructed under the program, and the failure in some cases to adequately consider the impact of project recreational facilities on surrounding recreational development.

Public Law 83-566, as amended, places no effective cap on the Federal cost of individual projects. Some of the projects constructed

under this law have become quite large and expensive, leading the Committee to question the wisdom of the more expensive projects being approved by simple Committee resolution. For example, during the 97th Congress, the Committee approved the Little Calument River Watershed in Illinois which had a Federal cost of $37.8 million. This report includes the Elk Creek Watershed project in Kansas whose Federal cost is $12.7 million. A provision in S. 1739 would require those Public Law 83-566 projects with over $10 million in Federal costs be authorized by an Act of Congress.

The Committee believes that the Small Watersheds program was originally conceived to provide primarily rural and agricultural benefits. Several individual projects have shown that the focus of the program has shifted, to some extent, towards more urban benefits rather than rural and agricultural benefits. The South Zumbro Watershed project in Minnesota, approved during the 97th Congress and Los Olmos Creek Watershed project described in this report are examples of this trend. Both are primarily urban flood control projects. S. 1739 contains a provision requiring that at least 20 percent of project benefits must be directly related to agriculture.

The Committee is concerned that many of the projects constructed under Public Law 83-566 may have impoundments suitable for public recreational use but to date remain undeveloped for that purpose and available only to nearby adjacent landowners. Large numbers of single purpose flood control, irrigation, or grade stabilization dams have been built by SCS with no provisions for public access. S.1739 contains language which would rquire the Secretary of Agriculture to study the recreation potential at these impoundments.

A provision requiring that the Soil Conservation Service include information in applicable project reports on the effects of proposed recreational development on surrounding recreational facilities is also included in S. 1739. This reflects Committee concern that in some cases the proximity of other recreational opportunities has not been properly considered in calculating recreational benefits for projects.

Descriptions of Watershed Work Plans Approved in This Report

BRUNDAGE WATERSHED, IDAHO

The 45,077 acre Brundage watershed is located in Adams County, in west central Idaho. The primary benefit of the planned project is irrigation. The project will consist of soil conservation practices on farms in the watershed and structural measures consisting of rebuilding and enlarging the existing Brundage dam and irrigation reservoir and improving the existing water distribution system. The total storage capacity of the planned reservoir is 7,330 acre-feet. In addition, 112 new turnout structures and 30,800 feet of irrigation ditching will be constructed. The total project cost is $2,826,700 of which 57 percent, or $1,623,700, is Federal cost. The benefit-cost ratio is 1.3 to 1, using a 7⅞ percent discount rate.

	Average annual dollars	
	Benefit	Cost
Annual benefits and costs: [1] Irrigation	320,040	243,100

[1] 7⅜ percent interest rate, 50-year project life.

	Public Law 566 funds		Other funds		Total dollars
	Dollars	Percent	Dollars	Percent	
Capital costs:					
Land treatment measures	0	0	87,500	100	87,500
Structural measures: Irrigation	1,623,700	57	1,115,500	43	2,739,200
Total	1,623,700	57	1,203,000	43	2,826,700

SOUTH FORK LICKING RIVER WATERSHED, OHIO

The South Fork Licking River Watershed encompasses 180,364 acres in Licking, Fairfield, and Perry Counties. Project benefits are recreation and flood prevention. Principle project features include land treatment measures, one single purpose flood prevention structure, one multiple purpose flood prevention-recreation structure (4,459 acre-foot capacity), 3.3 miles of new flood bypass channel, 11.9 miles of channel modification, and two recreational developments. The total project cost is $11,199,200, of which $7,148,400, or 64 percent, is Federal Cost. The benefit-cost ratio is 1.4 to 1 using a 7⅞ percent discount rate.

	Average annual dollars	
	Benefit	Cost
Annual benefits and costs: [1]		
Flood prevention	657,800	350,300
Recreation	707,300	508,800

[1] Based on April 1983 addendum; 7⅛% interest rate, 100-year project life.

	Public Law 566 funds		Other funds		Total dollars
	Dollars	Percent	Dollars	Percent	
Capital costs: [1]					
Accelerated land treatment	269,000	17	1,309,600	83	1,578,800
Structural measures:					
Flood prevention	3,563,000	83	715,000	17	4,278,000
Recreation	1,918,600	51	1,850,600	49	3,769,200
Project administration	1,397,600	89	175,600	11	1,573,200
Total	7,148,400	64	4,050,800	36	11,199,200

[1] Price base 1982.

CALAPOOYA CREEK WATERSHED, OREGON

The Calapooya Creek Watershed consists of 157,300 acres in Douglas County in southwest Oregon. Project benefits are recreation, irrigation, municipal and industrial water supply and flood prevention. Project features include land treatment measures, one multiple purpose dam (12,750 acre-foot storage capacity) water-based recreational development, and irrigation and drainage measures. The total project cost is $11,420,000, of which $4,323,600, or 38 percent, is Federal cost. The benefit-cost ratio is 1.4 to 1 using a 7⅞ percent discount ratio.

	Average annual dollars	
	Benefit	Cost
Annual benefits and costs: [1]		
Flood prevention	12,100	6,520
Irrigation	287,760	253,100
Recreation	535,220	383,170
M&I water supply	254,870	146,450

[1] 7⅜ interest rate, 100-year project life.

	Public Law 566 funds		Other funds		Total dollars
	Dollars	Percent	Dollars	Percent	
Capital costs:					
Land treatment measures	190,710	12	1,404,950	88	1,596,660
Structural measures: Flood prevention	83,400	100	140	0	83,540
Irrigation	897,920	34	1,755,980	66	2,653,900
M&I	1,900	1	1,893,470	99	1,895,370
Recreation	2,046,590	50	1,981,000	50	4,027,590
Project administration	1,103,080	95	61,500	5	1,164,580
Total	4,323,600	38	7,097,040	62	11,420,640

LOS OLMOS CREEK WATERSHED, TEXAS

The Los Olmos Creek Watershed encompasses 204,470 acres in Jim Hogg and Starr Counties in southern Texas. The project benefit is flood protection. Project features include one floodwater retarding structure (13,715 acre-foot storage capacity) and two dikes totaling 20,577 feet in length. The total project cost is $4,131,700, of which $3,424,250, or 83 percent, is Federal Cost. The benefit-cost ratio is 1.46 to 1, using a 7⅞ percent discount rate.

	Average annual dollars	
	Benefit	Cost
Annual Benefits and Costs:[1] Flood prevention	580,310	397,390

[1] 7⅞ interest rate, 100-year project life.

	Public Law 566 funds		Other funds		Total dollars
	Dollars	Percent	Dollars	Percent	
Capital costs:					
Structural measures: Flood prevention	2,824,330	80	700,450	20	3,524,780
Project administration	599,920	99	7,000	1	606,920
Total	3,424,250	83	707,450	17	4,131,700

ELK CREEK WATERSHED, KANSAS

The 89,036 acre Elk Creek Watershed is located in Atchison, Jackson, and Nemaha Counties in northeastern Kansas. Project benefits will be flood prevention, recreation, and agricultural, municipal and industrial water supply. Principle project features are 60 grade stabilization dams, and one multipurpose dam. The total storage capacity of the multipurpose dam is 11,969 acre feet. Recreational features associated with the dam include a sand beach, camping facilities, boat ramps and docks and parking. The total project cost is $19,919,900, of which $12,659,000, or 63 percent is Federal Cost. The benefit-cost ratio is 1.7 to 1 using a 7⅞ percent discount rate.

	Average annual dollars	
	Benefit	Cost
Annual Benefits and Costs:[1]		
Flood prevention	1,194,100	775,400
Recreation	427,600	253,400
Agricultural, municipal, and industrial water	193,900	41,300

[1] 7⅞ interest rate, 50-year project life.

	Public Law 566 funds		Other funds		Total dollars
	Dollars	Percent	Dollars	Percent	
Capital cost:					
Land treatment measures	383,000	12	2,779,700	88	3,162,700
Structural measures: Flood prevention	7,523,600	78	2,100,000	22	9,623,600
Recreation	1,571,500	50	1,573,400	50	3,145,400
Agricultural water supply	89,900	53	80,700	47	170,600
M&I water supply	2,900	1	339,200	99	342,100
Project administration	3,088,900	89	386,600	11	3,475,500
Total	12,659,800	63	7,260,100	37	19,919,900

COMMITTEE RESOLUTIONS

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS,
Washington, D.C., August 3, 1983.

Hon. JOHN R. BLOCK,
Secretary, Department of Agriculture,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR SECRETARY BLOCK: I am pleased to inform you that the Committee on Environment and Public Works has approved Resolutions authorizing five Soil Conservation Service Small Watersheds Projects. The five projects are: Brundage Watershed, Idaho; Elk Creek Watershed, Kansas; South Fork Licking River Watershed, Ohio; Calapooya Creek Watershed, Oregon; and Los Olmos Creek Watershed, Texas.

Enclosed you will find the original and four copies of each Resolution as approved by the Committee.

Sincerely yours,

ROBERT T. STAFFORD, *Chairman.*

Enclosures.

[98th Congress, 1st Session]

U.S. SENATE,
Committee on Environment and Public Works.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

Resolved by the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the United State Senate, That pursuant to the provisions of Section 2 Public Law 566, Eighty-third Congress, as amended, by Public Law 1018, Eighty-fourth Congress, the project for flood protection, recreation, and watershed protection in the Los Olmos Creek Watershed, Jim Hogg and Starr Counties, Texas is hereby approved substantially in accordance with the report of the Soil Conservation Service, Department of Agriculture, dated June, 1981 with the conditions that (1) the approval of appropriations for the project be limited to $3,424,250 the estimated Federal cost of the project as shown in the work plan for such project updated to current price levels, plus or minus such amounts, if any, and may be justified by reason of ordinary fluctuation in the cost of construction as indicated by engineering cost indexes applicable to the type of construction involved; and (2) the purposes served by the project shall be those set forth in the watershed work plan submitted for the

project and the scope of the project purposes and of the project shall be substantially as set forth in such work plan.

ROBERT T. STAFFORD,
Chairman.

JENNINGS RANDOLPH,
Ranking Minority Member.

Adopted: August 3, 1983.

[98th Congress, 1st Session]

U.S. SENATE,
Committee on Enivronment and Public Works.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

Resolved by the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the United States Senate, That pursuant to the provisions of Section 2 of Public Law 566, Eighty-third Congress, as amended, by Public Law 1018, Eighty-fourth Congress, the project for flood prevention, recreation, and watershed protection, in the Calapooya Creek Watershed, Douglas County, Oregon is hereby approved substantially in accordance with the report of the Soil Conservation Service, Department of Agriculture, dated December, 1979 with the conditions that (1) the approval of appropriations for the project be limited to $4,323,600 the estimated Federal cost of the project as shown in the work plan for such project updated to current price levels, plus or minus such amounts, if any, as may be justified by reason of ordinary fluctuation in the cost of construction as indicated by engineering cost indexes applicable to the type of construction involved; and (2) the purposes served by the project shall be those set forth in the watershed work plan submitted for the project and of the scope of the project purposes and the project shall be substantially as set forth in such work plan.

ROBERT T. STAFFORD,
Chairman.

JENNINGS RANDOLPH,
Ranking Minority Member.

Adopted: August 3, 1983.

[98th Congress, 1st Session]

U.S. SENATE,
Committee on Environment and Public Works.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

Resolved by the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the United States Senate, That pursuant to the provisions of Section 2 of Public Law 566, Eighty-third Congress, as amended, by Public Law 1018, Eighty-fourth Congress, the project for flood prevention, recreation, and watershed protection, in the South Fork Licking River Watershed, Licking, Perry and Fairfield Counties, Ohio is hereby approved substantially in accordance with the report of the Soil Conservation Service Department of Agriculture, dated June, 1980 with the conditions that (1) the approval of appropriations for the project be limited to $7,148,400 the estimated Federal cost of the project as shown in the work plan for such project

updated to current price levels, plus or minus such amounts, if any, as may be justified by reason of ordinary fluctuation in the cost of construction as indicated by engineering cost indexes applicable to the type of construction involved; and (2) the purposes served by the project shall be those set forth in the watershed work plan submitted for the project and the scope of the project purposes and for the project and the scope of the project purposes and of the project shall be substantially as set forth in such work plan.

ROBERT T. STAFFORD,
Chairman.

JENNINGS RANDOLPH,
Ranking Minority Member.

Adopted: August 3, 1983.

[98th Congress, 1st Session]

U.S. SENATE,
Committee on Environment and Public Works.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

Resolved by the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the United States Senate, That pursuant to the provisions of Section 2 of Public Law 566, Eighty-third Congress, as amended, by Public Law 1018, Eighty-fourth Congress, the project for flood prevention, recreation, and watershed protection, in the Elk Creek Watershed, Atchison, Jackson and Nemaha Counties, Kansas is hereby approved substantially in accordance with the report of the Soil Conservation Service, Department of Agriculture, dated November, 1982 with the conditions that (1) the approval of appropriations for the project be limited to $12,659,800 the estimated Federal cost of the project as shown in the work plan for such project updated to current price levels, plus or minus such amounts, if any, as may be justified by reason of ordinary fluctuation in the cost of construction as indicated by engineering cost indexes applicable to the type of construction involved; and (2) the purposes served by the project shall be those set forth in the watershed work submitted for the project and the scope of the project purposes and of the project shall be substantially set forth in such work plan.

ROBERT T. STAFFORD,
Chairman.

JENNINGS RANDOLPH,
Ranking Minority Member.

Adopted: August 3, 1983.

[98th Congress, 1st Session]

U.S. SENATE,
Committee on Environment and Public Works.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

Resolved by the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the United States Senate, That pursuant to the provisions of Sec-

tion 2 of Public Law 566, Eighty-third Congress, as amended, by Public Law 1018, Eighty-fourth Congress, the project for flood prevention, recreation, and watershed protection, in the Brundage Watershed, Adams County, Idaho is hereby approved substantially in accordance with the report of the Soil Conservation Service, Department of Agriculture, dated August, 1980 with the conditions that (1) the approval of appropriations for the project limited to $1,623,700 the estimated Federal cost of the project as shown in the work plan for such project updated to current price levels, plus or minus such amounts, if any, as may be justified by reason of ordinary fluctuation in the cost of construction as indicated by engineering cost indexes applicable to the type of construction involved; and (2) the purposes served by the project shall be those set forth in the watershed work plan submitted for the project and the scope of the project purposes and of the project shall be substantially as set forth in such work plan.*ERR20*

ROBERT T. STAFFORD,
Chairman.

JENNINGS RANDOLPH,
Ranking Minority Member.

Adopted: August 3, 1983,

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